



The National Science Foundation
Office of Polar Programs
United States Antarctic Program

Information System Rules of Behavior USAP Enterprise Information Infrastructure

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 AUGUST 2004

1. ACCEPTABLE USES OF USAP INFORMATION RESOURCES

The following activities are considered acceptable uses of the USAP Information Infrastructure. All users are reminded that USAP mission activities always take precedence over any personal activity. The NSF reserves the right to restrict or otherwise limit personal use based on resource availability, conflict with official business, and unacceptable information security risks.

Personal Telephone and Facsimile Use. Users may make personal telephone calls (including use of facsimile machines and voice mail), provided such use complies with these Rules and other USAP policies and procedures, and involves only a minimal cost to the government. The user is responsible for charges incurred when using the infrastructure for personal use.

Personal Use of Electronic Mail. Some limited personal use of the government's electronic mail services is permitted, provided it does not interfere with the participant's work or the work of others. Typical authorized limited personal use of email includes emergency communications and personal communications with family members, health care professionals, or teachers.

Personal Use of the Internet. Some limited personal use of Internet services is permitted, provided it does not interfere with the participant's work or the work of others. Extreme care must be taken regarding content matter. Typical authorized limited personal Internet use includes:

- Accessing travel information, forms or information on the Intranet or Internet
- Accessing parent organization information and online resources
- Accessing state and local government agencies on personal matters etc.
- Work-related events, such as technical symposiums, classes, and presentations
- Activities sponsored by the program, such as station recreational activities
- Events and activities specific to a particular USAP station or organization
- Program-sanctioned activities, such as blood drives, sanctioned clubs, and organizations
- Communications of reasonable duration using instant messaging applications
- Recreational web-browsing of a reasonable duration, during off-duty hours, that does not violate other elements of this policy and does not conflict with mission activities

Encryption of Personal Communications. Users may employ available encryption methods at their own expense on their non-USAP system when using the government's information infrastructure. Encrypted communications are still subject to monitoring and other authorized auditing actions. As a condition of use, users may be required to surrender their encryption key to appropriate NSF or law enforcement officials to assist in authorized investigative activities.

Third Party Software, Freeware and Shareware. Subject to management approval, users may install third party software, including freeware and shareware, when the software is required to support their work responsibilities. Users must possess a valid license for all third party software installed on government information systems assigned for their use. Prior to installation, users must use antivirus tools to ensure the software is free of viruses. If the third party software is discovered to be the cause of system errors or other problems, it will be removed.

Mailing Lists. Users are permitted to subscribe to mailing lists required to support their work responsibilities or grant tasks. While deployed to the Antarctic research stations or vessels, users must provide the local site IT staff with appropriate unsubscribe information so the lists may be cancelled upon their departure. The NSF reserves the right to restrict or deny mailing list subscriptions and traffic to meet mission requirements.

Personal Business or Commercial Uses. While deployed, users may conduct limited personal business matters using government information resources, such as when a sub-contractor needs to communicate with their home organization. Additionally, NSF may authorize the use of information resources to support the one-time disposal of personal items, such as normally occurs during the transition of personnel at the Antarctic research stations.

Election Material. It is acceptable to use the USAP information infrastructure to disseminate information regarding the process to participate in U.S. federal, state and local elections. For example, information about absentee ballot procedures is allowed. Information advocating a position for or against a candidate, an issue, or other element of an election is not allowed.

2. PROHIBITED USES OF USAP INFORMATION RESOURCES

The following activities are prohibited uses of the USAP Information Infrastructure.

Illegal Activities. All illegal activities are forbidden.

Adverse Activities. Any activity that could embarrass the NSF, adversely affect its interests, interfere with the performance of the USAP mission, or exceed allocated resources is prohibited.

No processing of classified information. The storage, processing or transmission of government classified information on unclassified computer systems, networks or via the Intranet and Internet is prohibited. All USAP information resources are to be considered unclassified and are not accredited for processing or transmitting classified information.

Hostile Environment. Under no circumstances is it permissible to access or download material that would create a hostile or offensive work environment, such as racist or sexually explicit material. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the following activities: accessing or transmitting sexual images, messages, jokes or cartoons; hate speech, or material that ridicules others on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, sex, disability, age, national origin, or sexual orientation or is otherwise defamatory or derogatory; content prohibited by law and/or regulation.

Prohibited Email Activities. Allowing others to use an assigned email account is prohibited. Placing others on a mailing list, subscription list, chat room list, or other list service without their consent is prohibited. Creating, originating, distributing or circulating "chain" or "pyramid" transmissions, mass mailings, hoaxes, or harassing messages is prohibited. "All employee" or broadcast messages disseminated using USAP information resources must be business related and approved in advance by the applicable manager. Using large distribution lists for non-business-related purposes, or sending large, memory intensive files or applications which may impede or disturb network operation is prohibited. Using email to proselytize or solicit for personal commercial ventures, religious or political causes, or outside organizations is prohibited.

Personal Information Services. Due to resource constraints, personal servers of any type are prohibited. In the case of approved science activities, all web services, file transfer services, and telnet/SSH services required for project support must be listed in the support requirements section of the user's science proposal, SIP, or ORW, and must be approved by NSF.

Chat Room and News Group Participation. Use of USAP information resources to participate in chat rooms, news groups, or similar activities where the public will view the posting is prohibited because such postings make use of the NSF's usap.gov domain. Use of the USAP Internet address of "usap.gov" is a representation of the National Science Foundation, analogous to the use of NSF letterhead in which the opinions expressed reflect on NSF.

Political Activities. Use of USAP information systems to support organized political activities, such as an election campaign or an organized lobbying activity is prohibited.

Gaming. Use of USAP information resources to participate in Internet-based gaming activities is prohibited due to the large consumption of bandwidth such activities incur. Gaming activities using local network resources may be permitted at the discretion of station managers.

Prohibited Business and Commercial uses. Conducting non-program business activities is prohibited. Using USAP resources to advertise commercial goods or services for sale for monetary or personal gain is prohibited. Using USAP resources to conduct non-program commercial activities is prohibited. Users may not establish or maintain a web-based business at a USAP operating location.

Prohibited Network Activities. Knowingly downloading, installing, storing or using malicious software, viruses, "cracking," keystroke monitoring software, or other actions that may be disruptive or counter-productive to business operations is prohibited. The introduction or use of packet sniffing software or any software intended to capture passwords is prohibited except when explicitly authorized for contract or business purposes and coordinated in advance with NSF. Monitoring network traffic (e.g., run a sniffer); accessing IT resources; or copying data, files, or software without prior authorization is prohibited.

3. EXPECTATIONS OF PRIVACY WHILE USING USAP INFORMATION RESOURCES

Users of USAP information resources have no expectation of privacy with respect to any information residing on government information systems or transmitted over government information networks, other than the regular

expectations associated with information governed by the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. The NSF considers user information placed on USAP information systems or transmitted across the USAP information infrastructure to be entrusted information, which is not normally released for public viewing without the user's authorization. The NSF will release user information found on USAP information resources to appropriate law enforcement agencies when asked to do so as part of an official investigation or other sanctioned activity. The NSF will, to the best of its ability, protect information within the USAP information infrastructure from unauthorized access. However, users make use of the government's information resources at their own risk. The NSF is not liable to the user for damages caused by unauthorized uses of the USAP infrastructure. Systems and Network administrators are authorized to access information located on USAP information resources or transmitted across the USAP information infrastructure when conducting their official duties. If such access occurs, the information will not be released for public viewing or to unauthorized persons.

4. . GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE USE OF USAP INFORMATION RESOURCES

In establishing these Rules of Behavior, the NSF has applied these guiding principles:

- USAP information resources, especially at the Antarctic research stations and aboard the research vessels, may be used for certain personal uses, in a manner that does not interfere with the program's mission. All mission activities take precedence over personal activities at all times.
- Personal communications, such as email or phone calls, that do not involve USAP business, will be considered entrusted communications, and not normally monitored or shared without the consent of the participating parties. Exceptions to this principle include requirements to make such communications available to support lawful investigations, to ensure proper operations and maintenance of the USAP infrastructure, or to correct or prevent damage to the USAP information infrastructure.
- Systems and network administrators, and others who may be exposed to a participant's personal communications as a part of their normal duties, are in a position of trust and will be held accountable for violations of that trust on their part.
- The National Science Foundation is not a common carrier, and does not possess the requisite infrastructure and resources necessary to guarantee the privacy of information processed or stored on USAP information systems or networks. Users of USAP systems agree that the government and its representatives are not responsible for the loss of personal information, or for the disclosure of personal information as a result of unauthorized activity by participants or by others outside the program.

Participants and their leaders are expected to use good judgment in appropriate use of program assets consistent with the purposes of these Rules. However, the final determination regarding what constitutes appropriate use consistent with these Rules is reserved to NSF management in coordination with the participant's organization.

5. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR USERS

User Responsibilities. When using the USAP information infrastructure you will be held accountable for your actions related to the information resources entrusted to you. USAP information resource users have the following responsibilities:

- Comply with these Rules of Behavior and all other USAP, OPP and NSF policies and procedures, as well as the policies and procedures of their sponsoring organization
- Protect sensitive information from disclosure to unauthorized individuals or groups. Disclosure of information is not at the users discretion, only when authorized by the NSF
- Ensure information security through effective use of user IDs and passwords
- Protect hardware, software, and information from damage, abuse, and unauthorized use
- Report security violations and vulnerabilities to the proper authorities. The Help Desk is the first point of contact for all reports
- Users shall not access, modify, duplicate, destroy, or disclose any information or software on a network or a computing system, unless so authorized
- Users shall not leave an active system unattended, thereby allowing an unauthorized person to gain access to a network or a computing system through the user's login session
- Users are responsible to ensure the integrity, availability, and confidentiality of all work-related data on systems assigned for their use. It is recommended that critical data on a hard disk be backed up periodically

Authorization for Access. Portions of the USAP information infrastructure are restricted to authorized users that have been granted special access permissions by the National Science Foundation or its authorized delegates. These areas are identified by warnings posted at their entry point or by the system's interactive request for authentication. You shall access only those areas for which you have been granted authorization to access.

Copyright and Intellectual Property Issues. All users of USAP information resources must comply with U.S. and international laws regarding copyrights and other intellectual property. Users must comply with copyright licenses

associated with the USAP information resource they are using. Users shall not make copies of licensed software for other microcomputers users or personal use. The presentation or display of digital media such as software, pictures, literary works and songs must comply with existing laws.

Alternative Workplace. When working at home or an alternative workplace, USAP information resources users must establish security standards at their alternate workplace sufficient to protect hardware, software, and information. This includes having only those resources employees really need and have authority to use; establishing a thorough understanding and agreement with supervisors as to what employees' security responsibilities are; using software according to licensing agreements; ensuring that confidentially-sensitive information downloaded is secure; being alert for anomalies and vulnerabilities; and reporting these anomalies to proper officials and seeking advice when necessary.

Personal File Storage. Each user is typically assigned a 'home' directory on their primary network which is usually accessible from any computer. This drive is provided for the storage of personal files. Files stored in this directory are not considered private, but will be afforded some measure of confidentiality against unauthorized access and disclosure.

Common File Storage. At each operating location, one or more directories are established for common use, and are accessible to all users. A temporary directory is provided for temporary (less than one week) use by users. Users have full rights to this directory and may add or delete files and directories as needed. All files and directories in the temporary directory are deleted automatically once a week, on a schedule determined by the station IT staff. A permanent common area is intended for operational storage and use. Users typically have read-only rights to this directory.

Departmental File Storage. Within each station network, directories are established for the various functional departments and participant organizations. Management of the allocated space is the responsibility of that department, with the assistance of the contractor IT department. User privileges for their department directories are set at the discretion and with the approval of the department manager.

Laptop Computers and other portable devices. Laptops and other portable computing devices, such as Personal Digital Assistants, must be evaluated for compatible software and up-to-date antivirus protection before they are used on the USAP network.

Official Business. Official business broadly includes any information processing that is required as part of an individual's work responsibilities. Official business includes, but is not limited to, the performance of USAP work-related duties in position descriptions, professional training and class work, work covered under grant agreements with the NSF, tasks directed via NSF contracts, agreements with international partners, and support activities related to NSF contract tasking.

Ownership of Information. All information located on a government information system is the property of the government, unless otherwise identified as belonging to another entity as a result of a contract or a grant agreement with the government.

Personal Use. Personal use broadly includes any information processing that is conducted in support of activities that do not constitute official business. A personal use activity is typically one in which the individual user, or a non-USAP entity is the primary beneficiary. Participants who use program assets for personal purposes are responsible for any and all liability that may arise from such personal use to include any violation of law, regulation or policy during such use.

Use of Antivirus Applications. All users of USAP information resources must also comply with USAP policies regarding the use of antivirus software.

Sensitive Information. The USAP information infrastructure can be publicly accessed. Do not place any of the following types of information on a USAP information system unless you are specifically authorized or instructed to do so: Medical Information; Government Acquisition Information; Operational Security Information; Proprietary Information; any other information considered sensitive. Where applicable; USAP information resource users must acquire and use sensitive information only in accordance with established policies and procedures. This includes properly safeguarding sensitive information contained in hardcopy or softcopy; and ensuring sensitive information is accurate, timely, complete, and relevant for the purpose which it is collected, provided, and used.

Reporting Violations. Users shall immediately report any known or suspected violations of these Rules or other Information Security policies or procedures. Please contact the USAP Help Desk at 720-568-2001 or helpdesk@usap.gov. Additional information may be found at <http://www.usap.gov>.

6. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CONTENT PROVIDERS AND SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS

Auditing of Information Systems. Where applicable; system administrators or security administrators will regularly review telecommunications logs and phone records, and conduct spot-checks to determine if Users are complying with controls placed on the use of USAP information resources.

Protection of Personal Information. During the course of their duties, Content Providers and Systems Administrators may have access to information of a personal nature. This information is considered entrusted and is

not to be disclosed unless authorized or directed to do so as part of a lawful investigation, or as directed by NSF management.

7. GUIDANCE ON PASSWORDS

Users shall follow the guidance below when creating or using their passwords:

- Passwords are considered operationally sensitive information and shall not be disclosed to co-workers; written down; or displayed anywhere that might allow others to copy or memorize them.
- Users shall avoid using passwords containing obvious items or information, such as names, initials, important numbers, etc.
- Passwords should not be trivial, predictable, or obvious.
- Passwords should be at least eight characters long and should contain a combination of alphabetic (upper and lower case), numeric, and special characters. Never use all numeric passwords.
- Avoid using words or permutations of words found in a dictionary.
- Avoid using names of family members or pets, hobbies, dates, or other familiar or easily guessed information about yourself.
- Change your password frequently (if the system(s) does not automatically.)
- Passwords must be changed when they expire, or are compromised.
- Any unauthorized use of an account or improper distribution of a password may warrant the immediate termination of the account.

8. GENERAL INFORMATION

The National Science Foundation provides information systems for the purpose of transacting official business of the U.S. Antarctic Program. The NSF establishes Rules of Behavior for the proper use of these systems. Any non-program use of USAP information resources must be authorized by NSF management. The National Science Foundation has created these Rules of Behavior to guide users, content providers and system administrators in the appropriate and acceptable use of USAP information resources. This document applies to all information resources that comprise the USAP Enterprise information infrastructure and to all users of these information resources. In this document, the term "you" or "your" refers to the User. The term "User" also includes Content Providers and Systems Administrators.

The USAP information infrastructure is a federal government information system composed of several interrelated information systems owned by, and operated for, the National Science Foundation. A significant portion of USAP program activities take place at remote or isolated locations managed by the U.S. government. Private sector support infrastructure is not available for the personal use of program participants at these locations. Consistent with federal guidelines for agency management of agency resources (5 USC 1103(a)(3)), USAP information systems may be used for morale and welfare purposes as deemed appropriate by program management.

Information maintained in NSF systems, including electronic mail files, may be reviewed by NSF officials who have a legitimate reason to do so when authorized by the Director or Deputy Director, or by the Inspector General. Unauthorized attempts to modify any information stored on this system, to defeat or circumvent security features, or to use this system for other than its intended purposes are illegal and may result in disciplinary action, criminal prosecution, or both.

Where applicable; USAP information resource users must comply with NSF policies and procedures, as well as your own organization's policies and procedures governing the personal use of NSF government equipment. In the event of a conflict, the NSF policies and procedures, including these Rules of Behavior, take precedence. NSF specific policies and guidelines can be reviewed by going to the NSF web site (<http://www.nsf.gov/>) and selecting "Policies."

These Rules of Behavior apply to all users of the USAP information infrastructure whether you are an NSF employee or not. USAP information resource users must comply with these Rules of Behavior. Because written guidance cannot cover every contingency, you are asked to go beyond the stated rules, using your best judgment and highest ethical standards to guide your actions. These Rules are based on Federal laws and regulations and agency directives. As such, there are consequences for non-compliance. Depending on the severity of the violation, at the discretion of management and through due process of the law, consequences can include: suspension of access privileges, reprimand, suspension, demotion, removal (dismissal), and criminal and civil penalties.

Your acknowledgement of these Rules of Behavior and your continued use of the system constitute your acceptance of these Rules of Behavior and of other relevant rules and regulations of the federal government and the National

Science Foundation. Acknowledgement is accomplished by selecting the agreement button when prompted to do so, or by signing a copy of this document as part of your account processing.

If you have any questions about these Rules, please contact the USAP Help Desk at 720-568-2001 or helpdesk@usap.gov. The responsible NSF point of contact for these Rules of Behavior is Mr. Patrick D. Smith, NSF Office of Polar Programs, 4201 Wilson Blvd, Suite 755, Arlington, VA 22230, 703.292.8032. NSF specific policies and guidelines can be reviewed by going to the NSF web site (<http://www.nsf.gov/>) and selecting "Policies."

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THESE RULES OF BEHAVIOR

Your acknowledgement of these Rules of Behavior and your continued use of the system constitute your acceptance of these Rules of Behavior and of other relevant rules and regulations of the federal government and the National Science Foundation. Clicking "Yes" in the USAP Logon prompt is an indication of your acknowledgement and acceptance of the EntROB.

Required Action for Acknowledgement

Sign and return the *NSF/OPP Information Security Acknowledgement* form to acknowledge the Enterprise Rules of Behavior (EntROB) and Information Security Awareness Program.